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IN THE CLAIMS

A presentation of all of the pending Claims with their current status indicated follows.

1. (Cancelled).
2. (Currently Amended) [The method of claim 1 further comprising] A method for manufacturing shot useful for discharge from a shotgun comprising:
providing a source of molten steel having an initial carbon content;
subjecting the molten steel to an atomization process so as to produce substantially spheroidal pellets;
annealing the pellets in a decarburizing atmosphere effective to decrease the carbon content in at least a surface layer of each of the pellets;
cooling the pellets, whereupon, on average the surface layer has a median Knoop hardness of less than 225 at 21°C; and
packaging the pellets in packages labeled as for use in loading shotshells.
3. (Currently Amended) [The method of claim 1 further comprising] A method for manufacturing shot useful for discharge from a shotgun comprising:
providing a source of molten steel having an initial carbon content;
subjecting the molten steel to an atomization process so as to produce substantially spheroidal pellets;
annealing the pellets in a decarburizing atmosphere effective to decrease the carbon content in at least a surface layer of each of the pellets;
cooling the pellets, whereupon, on average the surface layer has a median Knoop hardness of less than 225 at 21°C; and
loading the pellets into shotshells.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [+] 2 wherein the atomization process comprises water atomization.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [+] 2 wherein the surface layer is at least